

~~SECRET SENSITIVE~~ 151600Z APR 71 VIA CAS CIALS

FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER, SAIGON 2229

TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EYES ONLY HENRY A. KISSINGER RECEIVED
WHCA

REF: WHS 1237 ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

1. I AGREE WITH PARAGRAPH 1 REFTEL. ALL THE SIGNS INDICATE THAT WE ARE HEADING INTO THE SAME KIND OF SITUATION, BUT IN MORE AGGRAVATED FORM, THAT DEVELOPED IN THE 1967 ELECTIONS. WE WERE ABLE TO HANDLE THE SITUATION THEN WITH A FAIR DEGREE OF SUCCESS, BUT I THINK MORE STRENUOUS MEASURES WILL BE NEEDED IN COPING WITH THE PROBLEM THIS YEAR. THE RESOLUTION REQUIRING CUT OFF IN AID IF ELECTIONS ARE NOT "TOTALLY FAIR" IS ASKING SOMETHING WE HAVE NOT ACHIEVED IN THE U.S. IN TWO-HUNDRED YEARS AND SEEMS THE ULTIMATE IN ARROGANCE.

2. IN 1967 THE GVN EXTENDED INVITATIONS TO 41 COUNTRIES AND SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (THE ICFTU AND THREE PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATIONS - THE APU, IPU, AND THE COMMON-WEALTH ORGANIZATION) TO SEND OBSERVERS TO THE ELECTIONS. A TOTAL OF 116 OFFICIAL FOREIGN OBSERVERS, OF WHICH 27 WERE JOURNALISTS, FROM 24 COUNTRIES AND THE ICFTU ACCEPTED THE GVN INVITATIONS. IN ADDITION, THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY 100 UNOFFICIAL OBSERVERS, PREDOMINANTLY JOURNALISTS. IF TO THIS THERE IS ADDED THE REGULAR FOREIGN PRESS CORPS OF ABOUT 375, IT IS CLEAR THAT THERE WERE PRESENT NEARLY 600 FOREIGN OBSERVERS.

State Dept.
review completed.

3. THE AMERICAN OBSERVERS REPRESENTED A BROAD SPECTRUM OF THE AMERICAN SCENE, INCLUDING THREE SENATORS (HICKENLOOPER, MUSKIE, MURPHY), THREE GOVERNORS (HUGHES, NJ; MCCALL, OREGON; GUY, ND), MAYORS, CLERGY, JOURNALISM (JOHN S. KNIGHT, PRESIDENT OF KNIGHT PUBLICATIONS), LABOR, MINORITIES (WHITNEY YOUNG, URBAN LEAGUE), A TOTAL OF 22. IN ADDITION, ATTACHED TO THE U.S. DELEGATION WERE THREE SPECIALISTS IN ELECTIONAL AFFAIRS, RICHARD SCAMMON, PROFESSOR HERZBERG, RUTGERS, AND PROFESSOR PENNIMAN OF GEORGETOWN. THERE WERE PRESENT ALSO AS UNOFFICIAL OBSERVERS FIVE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, SENATORS KUCHEL AND SYNINGTON, REPRESENTATIVES WOLFE, MCCARTHY, AND BLACKBURN.

4. THE GENERAL CONSENSUS OF OUR OBSERVERS WAS THAT THE ELECTIONS WERE WELL ORGANIZED, FREE OF SIGNIFICANT FRAUD AND COERCION, AND WERE REASONABLY FAIR. THIS VIEW WAS ALSO EXPRESSED TO ME SPECIFICALLY BY THE THREE EXPERTS ATTACHED TO OUR GROUP, MESSRS. SCAMMON, HERZBERG, AND PENNIMAN.

5. WITH THIS PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AS BACKGROUND, I BELIEVE THAT THIEU WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO THE IDEA OF INVITING OBSERVERS AGAIN. I SHALL TRY TO TAKE THE MATTER UP WITH HIM PROMPTLY SO THAT I CAN POINT OUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SEIZING THE INITIATIVE IN ORDER TO FORESTALL CONGRESSIONAL ACTION OR AT LEAST TO GET IN AHEAD OF IT. THE SUGGESTIONS MENTIONED IN YOUR PARAGRAPHS 7, 8, AND 9 ARE ALL GOOD AND I SHALL DISCUSS THESE WITH HIM. I SHALL REPORT AS SOON AS I HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO TALK WITH THIEU. MORI c05076834

6. BEST REGARDS.

YES ONLY